



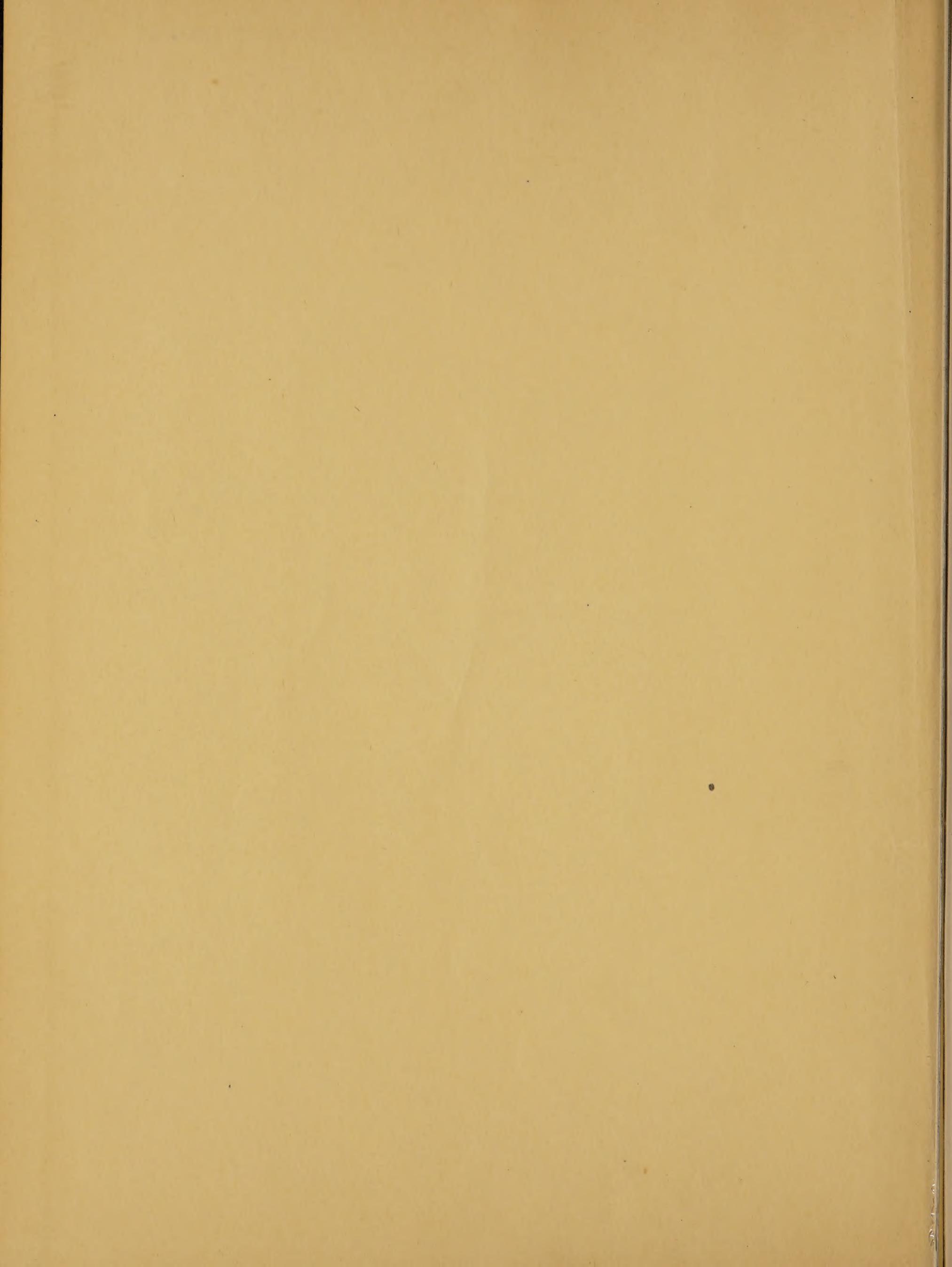
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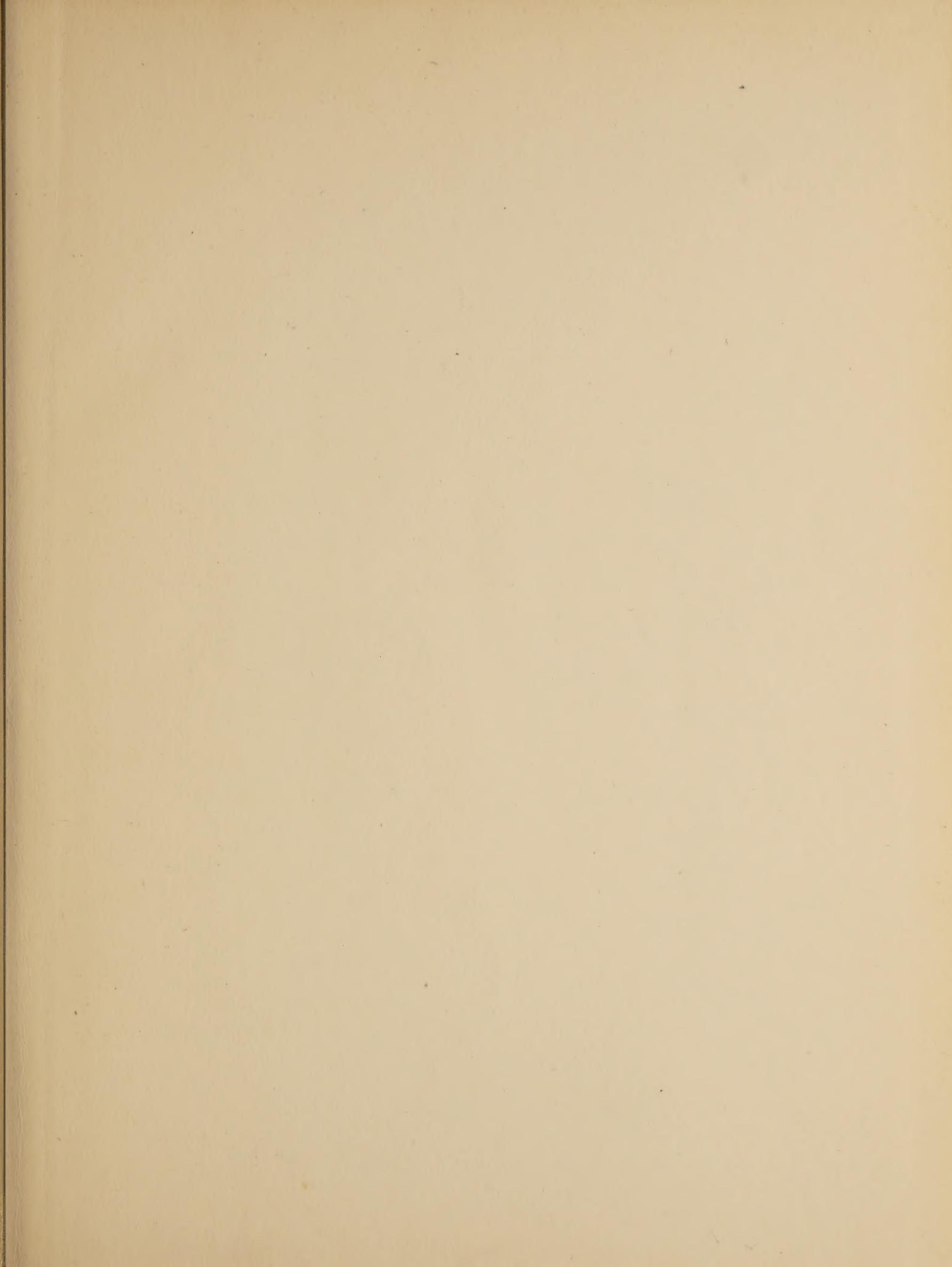
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VOCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE BLIND
AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
AND THE COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDY
OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY
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FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Part A

Purpose

As I am blind, I cannot accept "total disability" as a conclusive classification for all blind persons. While this is a popular conception about those who have lost their sight, the countless exceptions to this generality make it an unrealistic status and a greater handicap in itself than the actual blindness.

No one, however, can deny the existence of the tremendous difficulties of finding employment for the blind. The purpose of this thesis is to attempt to discover the real reason for this problem. Vocational rehabilitation is so closely related to social adjustment that the two must be considered in any discussion of the problems involved.

There are many private and governmental agencies which give employment to handicapped persons and aid in providing opportunities for them. Our government also has a long and admirable

record of providing the best in hospitalization and financial aid particularly for disabled veterans. All these efforts are constructive. Most of them are sincere attempts at rehabilitation. But what have we as people done toward the social readjustment of the handicapped? Most efforts have been within an unplanned and unco-ordinated pattern without a true and intelligent understanding of their problems.

Part B

Choice of Problem for Study

Blindness is an obvious handicap, a physical limitation, and in most cases the cause of social maladjustment, since blind persons are socially isolated to a high degree. Problems of adjustment related to vocational pursuits are many. The major emphasis in this study is placed on vocational problems, the field in which it is most common for blind and sighted to meet on a competitive basis.

Possibly there is a higher percentage of blind persons dependent on their vocations for livelihood than in the general population. Generally speaking, marriage implies the support of a woman by her husband and not by her own efforts. If, however, we may assume that marriage is less frequent in the case of blind females,¹ these must be dependent upon vocations for their livelihood. Moreover, blindness occurs more frequently among individuals in the lower economic strata. Hence

¹California State Dept. of Education, Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in California, Bulletin No. 7 (April, 1935), Table V, p. 6.

for the blind person dependent on his earnings for a living, a satisfactory vocational adjustment is a minimum essential of complete social adjustment. Since the blind are relatively socially isolated, it follows that many pursuits as avocations are impractical, precluded, or at the most unsatisfying, so that a satisfactory vocation is even more necessary.

Optimism was the keynote on which this study was begun in 1942, and logic demands that it end on the same note. The necessity for this attitude is that there is no other procedure possible for work with the handicapped under our modern concepts of welfare and rehabilitation. It should be pointed out that the problem of rehabilitation is not yet solved nor is any one solution foreseeable or expected. A tremendous amount of work has been done and a great deal of money spent in the field. All of the procedures used in the past with success must be continued and newer methods found to better the results and to augment the number of successful placements and readjustments. If handicapped persons are to be employed, tireless effort toward this goal is necessary. The

lines along which the work must proceed will be mentioned in this study.

Part C

Implications of a Handicap

It can be said as a generalization that any physical incapacity, which limits the activities of the individual or is obvious as a social handicap, or any physical divergence from the norm externally apparent or otherwise, which affects the attitude of the individual, can be a cause of mal-adjustment. A person having such abnormality may conceive himself to be inadequate in terms of his social situation. All persons are potentially handicapped, physically or psychologically, in unfamiliar or antagonistic environments. While it is true that all persons may suffer from handicaps of a physical, mental, or emotional nature which would impair their adjustment to specific social situations, frequently such untenable conditions do not occur or are of so little comparative significance that they may not constitute a problem in adjustment. Successful adjustment depends on the motivation to adjust to the surroundings in a manner compatible with one's estimate of his own ideals and capabilities. The abnormality of the individual need only be significant as it limits

him in competing with the group as a whole, or in his ability to maintain his status on a par with his own kind.

Part D

The Handicapped in the Social Situation

Every individual is a product of heredity and environment. We shall deal only with the environmental aspects of the problem here. Within the limitations of heredity, the personality is the product of the environment, or the society, as the society is the sum of many individuals acting and reacting on each other--social interaction. The handicapped person is no less a member of the society. In addition to all of the usual attitudes of other individuals, the handicapped person is subject to many conditioning attitudes which do not come to play on the average or normal individual. These are the attitudes which are formed and fostered by the stereotyped mental pictures of what a person of any given group should be. An example of this is the blind beggar with his proverbial tin cup. It must be kept in mind that these mental pictures, which are the bases for attitudes and potential behavior patterns, act on the handicapped in the same way as do a myriad of other attitudes, such as those toward white or black, Jew or Gentile, Republican or Democrat,

capitalist or laborer. The importance of these attitudes to the individual's personality depends on his ability to adjust to them. Adjustment does not necessarily imply acceptance by the individual of the stereotyped mode of behavior. The power of the stereotype should not be under-estimated, although in the case of the attitudes towards blind people, the stereotypes are complex, allowing for variations of age, sex, economic status, etc. Proof of the influence of this attitude on blind persons can be demonstrated by the number of institutionalized individuals who have overtly, at least, accepted one of the public concepts of what the blind should be.

Most individuals enter institutions for the blind because they have been unable to adjust to life in competition with sighted persons. At least it is reasonable to assume that the average blind person, like the average sighted person, would not prefer institution life at its best to a well-adjusted life outside. For the most part, the reason for otherwise healthy blind persons entering an institution is that they are unable to support themselves.

In California unemployment does not preclude life outside of an institution, since local, state, and federal governments co-operate in aiding the blind through cash allowances. In view of this fact, study of individuals entering institutions shows that all of them had some preconceived picture of their adult life which included some desirable method of occupying their time. Employment, establishment and operation of their own enterprise, professional work, or the active pursuit of some more or less worthwhile interest are a few of the things which blind people do and more dream of doing.² In the case of many of those who do not achieve their goal, an adjustment is necessary when they realize they must accept some other way of life. For example, for the blind man who has studied for and passed the bar examinations, but who cannot make a living at practicing law, the conflict is obvious. Intellectually he met the highest standards required by his state but was unable to compete with his sighted colleagues.

²In March, 1943 the author spent a month as a resident employee in the Industrial Home for the Adult Blind operated in Oakland by the State Dept. of Institutions. These conclusions are based on conversations with the inmates of the Home.

Few fledgling lawyers earn much more than their rent during the first few years of practice. The blind man has the additional handicap of encountering a negative attitude toward the employment of blind persons, at least, until they are well known.

SECTION II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SOCIAL STATUS
OF THE BLIND

The absolute lack of utility of a blind person in the social systems of several ancient civilizations was proved by their practice of destroying blind children at birth. While the value of an individual human life varies from time to time and from place to place, history supports the conclusion that as the importance of the individuality of the person increases, the greater is the effort to accommodate the society to variations, mental and physical differences or inadequacies.

The earliest records of attempts at self-help by the blind are reports of blind beggary. Over several centuries this practice became recognized as a legitimate occupation of the blind to the extent of conceding specific privileges to blind beggars. Toward the close of the Middle Ages the blind banded together in several forms of what has been called organized beggary. These organization were composed entirely of the blind and were for the purpose of controlling and distributing their members to the end of bringing the greatest

possible monetary gain to them.

In ancient Egypt, China, and Greece the practice of using blind men as court bards or minstrels was quite common. From these beginnings blind street minstrels and later blind soothsayers appear to have developed. The ignorance of early societies often fostered the belief that some of the blind had mystical powers. At times when religious fervor ran high, especially in the Medieval period, the blind were given alms and shelter as offerings in acknowledgment of "God's will." Blindness, like other physical impairments, was thought to be the "will of God."

Since recorded history of blindness dates from 1553 B.C. and since most of the early civilizations, with the possible exception of the Hebrew, carried on some sort of public relief, we find that the pattern for aiding the blind seems to have been fairly common.

In all ages philanthropists have made it their personal responsibility to aid the poor and the handicapped. Their activities ranged from assisting individuals to organizing hospitals, homes and places of employment or, as was more common,

combinations of all three.

The Christian church condoned beggary, and its early organized efforts to aid the blind were of a charitable nature. The pattern of organization followed that used by philanthropic individuals. It was not until medieval times that the various types of social dependents were segregated as to their cause of dependency or to their degree of dependency. Although the power of the church, which did much of the initial organizing of work for the blind, fluctuated, the concept of social responsibility developed steadily. Among municipalities assuming responsibility for their indigents, the city of Hanover established a hospital in 1256 where the blind, the lame, and those otherwise afflicted or ill were cared for.¹ Gradually the larger political unit, as represented by the European or American idea of the state, has assumed the responsibility for the indigent, resulting in a more equitable distribution of the benefits, obtained by general taxation.

Whereas, throughout history, individuals

¹R. S. French, From Homer to Helen Keller, (N.Y.: American Foundation for the Blind, Inc., 1932), p. 44.

have made outstanding successes of their lives in many lines of endeavor and institutions affording some opportunities for employment were found, the concept of vocational rehabilitation dates only from the post-war period following World War I.

The most significant conclusion to be drawn from the history of work done for the blind is that civilized society has attempted to create a compatible environment for the handicapped through institutionalizing them. Left to their own resources only exceptional handicapped individuals make successful adjustment to the society of the physically normal. Obviously, the easiest path for the accommodation of such individuals was to establish them in semi-isolated communities designed to remove those elements which cause competition and friction, unfavorable to the handicapped and irritating to the other members of society.

More than a thousand years of institutionalizing the handicapped has produced personalities unfit for life in the larger society,² if

²Thomas D. Cutsforth, The Blind in School and Society, (N.Y.: D. Appleton & Co., 1933), Chapter II.

and when the individual should be freed or should extricate himself from the sheltered environment. Moreover the segregation of the handicapped has produced a society void of culture patterns for social and economic accommodation to its less fortunate members.

A break in the practice of isolation was made by educators and workers for the blind in California when they drew up a plan for state-wide reorganization. Among other important changes for aiding the blind, the plan called for the conversion of California's major institution from The Industrial Home for the Adult Blind to the Training Center for the Adult Blind.³

³"Report of Inter-Department Committee on Study of Problems of and Services for the Blind." (mimeographed). Prepared in accordance with the provisions of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 41 (1945). Published October 10, 1945.

SECTION III

SOME CONTEMPORARY METHODS OF AIDING THE BLIND

Part A

Introduction

It is a known fact that the majority of handicapped persons have little success in finding suitable employment and that those who do so obtain it only after much difficulty and loss of time. In the past as in the present, disabled veterans and civilians alike have been subjected to an unnecessarily high percentage of unemployment, due more to the public's lack of knowledge as to their capabilities than from their own real inability to hold jobs. The successful minority of employed handicapped persons proves that specific handicaps in themselves do not preclude the efficient employment of these people when they are placed in suitable occupations. The greatest existing barrier to mass employment of the handicapped is the lack of public acceptance of the idea of rehabilitation. There exist in our culture many patterns which arouse emotional attitudes of pity toward the handicapped and which,

by so doing, prevent the realistic comprehension of their problems.

Our society, as a whole, views the handicapped as economic dependents. Proof of this is found in the many existing federal, state, and private agencies for their welfare. To be sure, their dependency is a recognized fact. Pecuniary aid and its extension are necessary but will always be only remedial in nature. It is to our credit that we have recognized the plight of our handicapped, but it is not to our credit that we placidly accept this method of relief. Rather, we should demand that the cause of dependency be thoroughly investigated, publicized, and removed in so far as is possible.

The modern conception of social work is that of an endeavor to remove the causes of social ills rather than merely to remedy the damage after it has been done. Obviously, the simplest way to remove the problems of disability is to prevent the injury or disease. Attempts of this type are numerous and very successful, but even so they have not removed all hazards from disease, industrial accidents, domestic accidents, nor casualties in

war time. At present we see at home and abroad more industrial and military injuries than ever before. Hence, for the present, we must accept the fact that the care of the handicapped will be an even more pressing problem for many years to come.

Direct cash aid does not solve the whole problem. At best, it affords only a minimum subsistence which is in many cases a further cause for new social maladjustment. Most of the otherwise employable handicapped would much prefer to be entirely self-sufficient. The conflict, which arises in the mind of the intelligent blind person from his realization of his parasitic position in society, becomes more damaging instead of being removed by unearned aid. The individual is left with all of his time on his hands, and this factor alone is demoralizing--even when idleness is by choice. The realization by the individual that he is useless to himself and to society is the basis for the conflicts which usually are the causes of social maladjustment.

Part B

Contemporary Federal Activities

Relative to the aforementioned cash aid to the blind, the federal government participates in this program with the states and counties, as well as in several other fields of aid.

Social Security Act

The Social Security Act of 1935 and amendments thereto provide for the development of social protection. Aid to the blind under Title X of the Act is designed specifically to provide assistance for needy blind persons.¹ The social security programs, old age and unemployment, provide many benefits which accrue to the blind, along with the general public. Other federal activities which are specifically helpful to the blind are old age assistance and aid to dependent children.

Military Pensions

Military pensions for the blind have been a federal activity since 1862 and are continued under the Veterans Administration program for dis-

¹Social Security Act, Title X; 49 Stat. 645 (1935), as amended, 53 Stat. 1397 (1939), 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1201-1206 (1940). Provides for federal grants to aid state payments to needy blind persons.

abled veterans. At a later date blind children of veterans who had lost their sight before the age of 16 were granted pensions. Further legislation continued this practice for children of veterans of World War I, but liberalized it to include children who had lost their sight before the age of 18.²

Guide Dogs for Veterans

The act of May 24, 1944 authorizes the Veterans Administration to provide Seeing-Eye Dogs for blind persons.³

Federal Grant for Purchase of Physical Equipment

Since 1878 the federal grant for the purchase of school books and tangible apparatus has been increased until it is approximately \$125,000 per annum.⁴ Most of the equipment is used in state

²38 U.S.C. Sec. 717, 48 Stat. 11 (1933). Pensions to blind veterans now governed by Vet. Admin. regulations. VA Reg. (a), Part I l. (1). Blind pensions--\$200; Anatomical loss of both eyes--\$265.

³Act of May 24, 1944; 58 Stat. 226 (1944), 38 U.S.C. Sec. 251 (Supp. 1946).

⁴20 Stat. 468 (1879), 20 U.S.C. Sec. 101-105 (1940). Act to promote education of the blind. Sets up trust funds and authorizes annual appropriation to American Printing House for the Blind, Louisville, Ky., for the production of books to be distributed to public institutions for the education of blind persons.

schools for the blind or dispensed to individuals through state agencies free of charge, or through private agencies at cost. Such equipment includes books, embossed maps, Braille writing paraphernalia, sound reproduction records (talking books) and their reproducers.

Federal Rehabilitation

In 1920 the federal government began a broad program for the rehabilitation of physically handicapped persons through a system of matching federal with state funds.⁵ At the present time approximately \$3,500,000 of federal funds is dispersed to the various states, a part of which is used for the rehabilitation of the blind. It should be noted here that several states do not have such rehabilitation programs for their blind and consequently the blind of these states do not receive federal aid under the federal rehabilitation program.

Diversified Privileges

Recognizing the obviously precarious economic status of the blind, the federal government has

⁵Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1920, as amended; 29 U.S.C. Sec. 31-41 (Supp. 1943).

granted diversified privileges with the purpose of equalizing certain expenditures which were formerly prohibitive. Special mailing privileges made possible the circulation of bulky Braille and recorded material.⁶ In 1927 a permissive clause was passed by Congress as an amendment to the Interstate Commerce Act allowing transportation companies to grant to blind persons a single-fare ticket covering the blind individual and his guide. Further legislation in 1937 allowed common carriers to permit a blind person and his guide dog to travel on a single fare.⁷

Income Tax Deduction

The Internal Revenue Code provides an extra \$500 income tax deduction for blind persons.⁸

Research and Information

In 1930 the United States Commissioner of Education established a Division of Special Problems which made available to local educational inter-

⁶39 U.S.C. Sec. 233, 293c, 331 (Supp. 1943). Provides for reduced postal rates for letters and periodicals written in Braille and for free transportation of Braille books and magazines to and from libraries for blind persons.

⁷Interstate Commerce Act, Sec. 22; 44 Stat. 1247 (1927), as amended, 50 Stat. 475 (1937), 49 U.S.C. Sec. 22 (1940).

⁸Internal Revenue Code, Sec. 23 (y).

ests statistical and analytical information relative to the problems of educating the blind child, as well as other handicapped children. This counseling service, based on research, has given stimulus to progressive programs for the education of handicapped children.⁹

Library Service

The Pratt-Smoot Law, passed in 1931, enabled the Library of Congress to participate in the expansion of library service to the blind to the extent of \$100,000 per annum. The appropriation is now approximately \$1,125,000 per annum,¹⁰ for the manufacture of talking books and their reproducers and for Braille and other embossed media. The above material is made available to the blind through approximately twenty-seven centrally located distributing libraries, most of which are departments of state libraries.

⁹R. B. Irwin, "Federal Provisions of Benefit to the Blind," What of the Blind?; ed. by Helga Londo (N.Y.: Amer. Found. for the Blind, 1941), II.

¹⁰Pratt-Smoot Law: 46 Stat. 1487 (1931), as amended, 2 U.S.C. Sec. 135a (Supp. 1946). Authorizes annual appropriation of \$1,125,000 to Library of Congress for books and records to be distributed to blind persons.

Vending Stands

In 1936 the Randolph-Sheppard Act opened federal buildings to blind persons for the establishment and operation of vending stands.¹¹ The program is federally administered by the Rehabilitation Department under the United States Commissioner of Education. Specific authorization for a stand in a federal building must be granted by a department or agency in charge of maintenance of the building. Licensing of vending stand operators is delegated to state agencies, usually the department for the blind, but in the case of California it is the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Education.

Purchase of Blind-made Goods

In 1938 the Wagner-O'Day Act made possible the absorption of much of the production of blind-made goods.¹² Through the authorization of federal purchases for federal use of brooms, mops, and

¹¹ Randolph-Sheppard Act; 49 Stat. 1559 (1936) 20 U.S.C. 107-107f (1940).

¹² Wagner-O'Day Act; 52 Stat. 1196 (1936), 41 U.S.C. Sec. 46-48 (1940). Creates Committee on Purchases of Blind-made Products to determine fair market prices of blind-made goods offered to the federal government and gives preference to such goods in federal purchasing.

other commodities from non-profit sheltered workshops, several hundred blind workers were made self-supporting without increasing the cost to the federal government.

Copyright Privileges

An amendment to the Copyright Act enables material in raised print to be copyrighted in the United States although printing (binding or other mechanical work) was done outside the U. S.¹³

A further amendment legalizes the importation of piratical copies (imported during term of U. S. copyright) in raised print.¹⁴ These amendments tend to remove raised print material from competitive commerce with the purpose of increasing their availability to the blind and widening the scope of useful literature.

Our modern concept of the function of the federal government's activities in educational and social fields is personified in the assumption of those duties which can best be done on a broad front. The above mentioned federal activi-

¹³Copyright Act of 1909, 315, 35 Stat. 1078 (1909), 17 U.S.C. Sec. 15 (1940), amended by 44 Stat. 8181 (1926).

¹⁴Copyright Act of 1909, 331, 35 Stat. 1082 (1909), 17 U.S.C. Sec. 31 (1940).

ties are all in the nature of enabling functions. The federal legislation so far enacted has been designed to establish minimum standards and to aid the states to achieve at least these standards without interfering with the states' rights and obligations.

Part C

Contemporary State Activities

In the execution of federal and state programs the actual contact with the blind is done primarily by state agencies. County welfare agencies constitute the major exception to this procedure, in that they administer the welfare programs and aid to the needy blind. This work is best done locally and is partially supported by county funds. As there are forty-eight states, there are forty-eight variations in the methods of administration and application of the various fields of education, employment, enterprises, and welfare. Organization ranges from systems which are completely organized under a department for the blind to systems like that used in California, under which the usual departments (i.e., Education, Institutions, and Welfare) handle work for the blind in their own fields. Probably there is even greater variation among the several states in the amount and quality of the work done with the blind. As is true in other fields of state activity, the wealthier states participate in more of the federal programs, have more state supple-

mentary programs, and conduct their activities more effectively than do those states having less tax money. At the present time the progressive states are working in nearly every field of activity which seems to give promise of raising the educational and vocational standards and the general welfare of those citizens having visual handicaps. Specialists in these fields work not only with the individuals, but make contact with the public as frequently as is possible to make known the potentialities of the blind for normal, productive lives.

As California is one of the most progressive states, a brief outline of activities as practiced in this state is given:

Department of Education

Under the Department of Education, standards and methods for the instruction of blind students are provided, and state schools for the blind are operated.¹⁵ The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, under the Department of Education, handles

¹⁵Co-ordinating Committee on State Services for the Blind, State Services for the Blind in Calif., (3rd ed; Sacramento: State Printing Office, June, 1944), pp. 8-10.

the training and placement of the visually handicapped as trainees for specific occupations.¹⁶

Instruction in reading raised print and library service are other functions of the Department of Education which reach into the home to serve the young and old alike through the availability of appropriate styles of type--Braille and Moon--in suitable literature.¹⁷

Department of Institutions¹⁸

The State Department of Institutions provides sheltered employment with living accommodations for some, instruction in handcraft which may be practiced at home or in industry, and provides adjustment service for its clients when feasible.

Department of Social Welfare¹⁹

To promote the welfare of the individual blind persons, the State Department of Social Welfare supervises the administration of the statutes providing aid to the partially self-supporting blind residents and aid to the needy blind. This

¹⁶Calif. Vocational Rehabilitation Act, Education Code, Division 4, Chapter 7, Article 10--Vocational Rehabilitation.

¹⁷Co-ordinating Com. on State Services for the Blind, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 16-20.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 23-29.

Department assists the fifty-eight counties in meeting the various special needs which are incident to blindness and which must be met to alleviate, in a measure, the disadvantages which fall to the blind on physical, social, or economic levels.

Co-ordinating Committee

An unofficial activity of the heads of the several departments in service on the Co-ordinating Committee on State Services for the Blind. This Committee was formed to alleviate the lack of co-ordination characteristic of the type of over-all organization of the state departments. Since the three major departments of public service deal with the blind under their jurisdiction, it was necessary to have some means of co-ordinating the various activities to remove duplication and to facilitate the expansion of the service.²⁰

²⁰Co-ordinating Com. on State Services for the Blind, op. cit., Foreward, p. 5.

Part D

Some Contemporary Private Activities

The problems of nearly every phase of life affected by blindness are under the consideration of some philanthropic organization outside governmental activities. During the lifetime of most blind persons the need for outside assistance and guidance arises in most of the areas of social activity. Many of the needed services are best provided by private organizations which have been instituted and sustained by the obvious need for such special activities. The growth of these service organizations has been slow but persistent. The usual pattern is the founding of an organization to conduct an activity to satisfy a local need. Other communities having the same need adopt the same method. In the case of activities which have state or nation wide significance, the local groups servicing these needs usually organize a federation for their mutual benefit, through the exchange of information and leadership, and for the broadening of their base through wider public interest and financial backing.

Local OrganizationsSan Francisco Association for the Blind.--

As one example of local organizations established for the blind, the San Francisco Association for the Blind, 1097 Howard Street, San Francisco, operating under the copyright trade name of "Blind-craft," works primarily in the field of providing employment for the blind through their manufacturing center and assists the blind directly through financial aid and by supplying recreational opportunities.

San Francisco Center for the Blind (1019 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco,)---Another local organization which deals exclusively in the field of recreation.

Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc.--This corporation was organized to service northern California through the training of guide dogs and supplying them free of charge by the collection of private subscriptions. These examples of local organizations have their counterparts in one form or another in nearly every large center of population.

Statewide Organizations

The California Council for the Blind is composed of a group of local clubs which have banded together primarily to foster legislation beneficial to the blind.²¹ This organization is interested in a wide variety of governmental activities affecting the blind, ranging from education through health and welfare.

National Organizations

American Foundation for the Blind.-- From a relatively small beginning, the Foundation has developed until the activities constitute a virtual clearing-house for information and essential material for the use of the blind of the forty-eight states.²² Individual blind persons can receive information on any subject relative to their problems merely by corresponding with this organization. The two professional periodicals carry pertinent information for workers with the blind. Scholarships have been established to aid

²¹ Calif. Council for the Blind, Insight; Twenty-second annual meeting Calif. Council for Blind, April 14-15, 1944 (Bakersfield: Union Labor Press), I.

²² R. B. French, From Homer to Helen Keller, (N.Y.: Amer. Found. for the Blind, Inc., 1932), pp. 181, 240, 266, 267.

worthy blind students in receiving advanced education. The American Foundation for the Blind is the designated organization through which special transportation fare concessions are handled. The production and distribution of talking books and other paraphernalia essential to the blind is another of the Foundation's major activities.

Matilda Ehrler Magazine for the Blind.²³ Its primary function is the publication of a monthly Braille, New York Point, and Moon magazine of an informative and entertaining nature. This organization also acts as an agency through which physical equipment, i. e. typewriters, for the use of the blind may be obtained at discount.

The Seeing Eye, Inc., of Morristown, New Jersey, is a privately operated and privately endowed organization for the training of guide dogs and for the training of blind persons in their use. This service is available to any qualified blind person in the United States. The dogs are purchased by the individual for a reasonable sum and the remaining deficit is made up by private

²³R. S. French, From Homer to Helen Keller, (N.Y.: Amer. Found. for the Blind, Inc., 1932), p. 251.

subscriptions.²⁴

National Associations

The American Association of Instructors of the Blind is an organization for the exchange of ideas and information among instructors of the blind with the specific aim of raising the national standard of instruction. This is done through publications and periodic conventions.

The American Association of Workers for the Blind is another organization having similar aims in a different field and of wider scope. The membership of this association is composed of workers in all fields of endeavor for aiding the blind. Membership is also opened to lay persons having interest in improving the lot of the blind.²⁵

The National Society for Prevention of Blindness does not work exclusively with the blind, although its work stems from work with the blind. It is one of the few associations which deals with preventive measures rather than remedial. The three major fields of activity are: the study and

²⁴The Seeing Eye, Inc., The Seeing Eye Guide; (New Jersey: The Seeing Eye, Inc., Sept. 1945), II, No. 3.

²⁵R. S. French, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-250.

investigation of causes of blindness, the advocacy of removal of causes, and the dissemination of knowledge pertinent to the care and use of the eyes.²⁶

General Private and Individual Activities

The above listing of activities covers only a few of the major organizations and is presented for illustrative purposes. Countless service organizations (Lions Club, for example) carry on work for the blind in many fields and are so constituted that their efforts are flexible enough to be applied wherever and whenever the need for their assistance occurs. A regular Lions Club activity is that of aiding scouting among the blind boys.²⁷ An example of action servicing a specific need is that of making available a collegiate scholarship for an individual.

The work of many individuals, who find time out of their otherwise busy days to give personal services, is the least heralded, the most productive of self-satisfaction, and of real aid to the

²⁶ Helga Lende (ed.), What of the Blind? (N.Y.: Amer. Found. for the Blind, 1928), I, p. 16.

²⁷ Abel F. Lemos, "Believing is Seeing," Family Circle, XXXI, No. 5 (Nov., 1947), p. 100.

blind. This aid is given in nearly as many forms as there are personal and social requirements. Reading to the blind, guiding the blind, and the performing of small chores yield pleasure far beyond any monetary evaluation of them. These services ease the endless personal inconvenience incurred by blindness.

SECTION IV

A CENSUS AND ECONOMIC SURVEY OF THE BLIND

Part A

Introduction

There are no reliable statistics in the United States as to the extent of blindness or the characteristics of the blind population. The United States decennial census of 1940 did not include statistics of the blind because it had been determined that, in spite of the great amount of care taken in tabulating information relative to the blind, resulting information was found to be unreliable. It was felt that a misleading statistical analysis of the blind would be worse than none at all.¹ It is to be hoped that improved statistical methods will be found for the collec-

¹From The Blind and Deaf Mutes in the United States--1930. The total number of blind in the United States in 1930 were 63,489 and the total number of the blind in California was stated to be 2,597; whereas the Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif. for 1935 indicated that there were 6,960 blind in California, showing a considerable discrepancy in calculations even when the five year differential is considered. U.S. Dep't. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D. C.; U.S. Printing Office, 1931. pp. 4 and 10.

tion of accurate data as to the status of the blind.²

In that there is no comprehensive social and economic census of the blind in the United States to date, A Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in California³ is used here as the basis for the probable status of the blind in the United States. While the above mentioned census is at this writing thirteen years old, and while the economic situation of the population as a whole is somewhat improved over 1935, it is improbable that the percentages indicated in the survey are very different from those actually existing today. The possible exceptions to this generality are the percentage of persons who have received vocational training through the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation since becoming blind, and those individuals subsequently removed from the number of unemployed, permanently or temporarily, as a result of such training.

²C. McKey, "Some Problems in Statistics of Blindness," What of the Blind?, ed. by Helga Lendo (N.Y.: Amer. Found. for the Blind, Inc., 1941), II, pp. 165-176.

³Calif. State Dep't. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif., Bulletin No. 7 (April, 1935).

Contrary to popular belief the number of blinded veterans resulting from World War II is not so great as might have been expected. Improved medical and surgical knowledge and procedures kept the actual number of cases of blindness to 1,269.⁴

4

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

Washington 25, D. C.

February 24, 1948

In reply refer to: SDC

Mr. W. L. Dauterman
1011 Balboa Avenue
Burlingame, California

Dear Sir:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of February 9, 1948, requesting the number of cases of blindness from World War I and World War II.

The following table furnishes latest avail-

able information of the number of veterans discharged from service who are on the compensation or pension rolls, who have a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye:

VETERANS ON COMPENSATION OR PENSION ROLLS WITH MAJOR DISABILITY OF LOSS OR IMPAIRMENT OF VISION

Degree of Impairment

Service, and Origin of Disability	Central Visual Acuity in better eye, 5/200 or less	Central Visual Acuity in better eye over 5/200, but not more than 20/200
World War I		
Service connected	710	448
Non-service connected	1,445	1,338
Total	<u>2,155</u>	<u>1,786</u>
World War II		
Service connected	964	305
Non-service connected	24	5
Total	<u>988</u>	<u>310</u>

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) WILLIS HOWARD
Assistant Administrator
for Claims

Part B

Percentages and Distributions of the Blind
in Various CategoriesTotal Population of Blind

The total population of California in 1930 was 5,677,451.⁵ By 1935, due to the unusual immigration of persons from the economically devastated Midwest, it was estimated that on January 1, 1935 the total population was 6,031,000.⁶ From the Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in California,⁷ the adjusted figure for the total number of blind persons in 1935 was 6,960, or approximately one tenth of one per cent.

Sex Distribution

Probably as a result of more active lives, exposure to disease, industrial and other occupational hazards, the incidence of blindness among males is appreciably higher. The number of blind

⁵Encyclopedie Britannica (1941), Vol. IV, p. 592a.

⁶Letter from H. P. Ormsby, Director of Research Dept., Calif. State Chamber of Commerce, Jan. 12, 1948. Cited an estimate by the Calif. Taxpayers' Association.

⁷Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif., Bulletin No. 7, (April, 1935).

males was 3,966,⁸ or 57%, whereas there were 2,994 females, or 43% of the total number of blind persons.⁹

Age Distribution

Obviously the matter of age is an important factor in an economic survey. This is especially true in the case of the blind, where the employable period is probably shorter than in the case of the sighted. If we assume that the employable period for the blind is from the age of 20 to 50, it will be seen that only approximately 22% of the blind population have a reasonable opportunity for employment even assuming that they may be otherwise qualified. The table on the following page shows a complete distribution of the blind according to age.

⁸As compared to the sex ratio for the population as a whole in California in 1935--approximately:--Males, 51.3%, Females, 48.7%. World Almanac, N.Y. World-Telegram 1935, p. 246; 1945 p. 482.

⁹Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif., Bulletin No. 7 (April, 1935).

TABLE I
AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age Groups	Number	Per cent
Below 10 years	4	.1
10 to 19 "	419	12.0
20 to 29 "	174	5.0
30 to 39 "	208	6.0
40 to 49 "	306	8.7
50 to 59 "	478	13.6
60 or over	1,911	54.4
Not stated	12	.2
Total	3,512	100.0

"It will be noted that only a very small number of blind persons are under 20 years of age, 12.1%, while a surprisingly large number are over 60 years of age, 54.4%. This uneven distribution is due largely to the operation of two factors; the results of years of excellent work done in the field of prevention of blindness, and the fact that a large number lose their sight later in life as the result of disease or accident."¹⁰

Degree of Blindness

The accepted border line of blindness is the visual acuity of 20/200, or the ability to see at twenty feet with the better eye that which the

¹⁰ Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif. Bulletin No. 7, (April, 1935) pp. 4-5.

normal eye can see at 200 feet. The information obtained in the study, A Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in California, was gathered through questionnaires. The following standards were used... "whether the blind person has light perception, can recognize friends by sight, or can read newspaper headlines." The result indicated that there were: totally blind, 1,318 or 37.5%, and partially blind, 2,194 or 62.5%, of the total number, 3,512, recorded as blind.¹¹ It should be noted that this figure does not include many cases of seriously impaired vision nor any cases of monocular vision. For the purposes of this paper, all those recorded as blind persons are classed as "economically blind" since they are unable to participate in competition in the usual fields of employment possibilities.

The true situation probably is that a very large number of unrecorded visually handicapped persons, who do not appear on the rosters of private or public relief agencies, are actually "economically blind," since their employment is sporadic and on levels which do not demand their

¹¹ Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif., Bulletin No. 7, (April 1935), p. 5.

best skills or take advantage of their aptitudes. The result of such willy-nilly employment must necessarily be lower earning power than that which might be obtained through the use of vocational rehabilitation and scientific placement.

Distribution of the Blind according to
Period of Blindness

There exists a large number of persons who have been blind nearly all of their lives. Since there are psychological differences between those without visual memory and those having visual memory, the figures (shown in the table following) are significant.

The incidence of congenital blindness and early blindness is being reduced, through improved medical practice and its wider acceptance. The majority of the blind lose their sight later in life. While it is to be hoped that the availability of improved medical services will hold the actual number of new cases of blindness to a minimum, it is presumed that the percentage of the total number of blind persons in the older age group will rise since blindness is characteristic of senility and since the population as a whole

now has a longer life expectancy. As there are always many individuals in the group of the newly blinded adults, this field offers expanding opportunities for psychological adjustment workers, Braille teachers, vocational teachers, and employment officers. The following table shows the breakdown of the total number of blind according to length of period of blindness.

TABLE II¹²

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BLIND ACCORDING
TO PERIOD OF BLINDNESS

Period	Number	Per cent
Congenital	194	5.5
Less than 1 year	40	1.1
1 to 5 years	968	27.6
6 to 10 years	716	20.4
11 to 20 years	556	15.3
More than 20 years	628	17.9
Total	3,512	100.0

Distribution of the Blind According
to Cause of Blindness

Approximately 25% of the cases recorded were recorded as "cause unknown" or "cause not stated." The distribution indicated that, of the 60% caused by disease, more than half were general diseases

¹² Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif. Bulletin No. 7, (April, 1935) Table II, p. 6.

rather than specific diseases of the eye.

Due to the stigma attached to venereal disease, the .1% is probably inaccurate, as evidenced by comparison with surveys of the disease itself. In spite of the emphasis on accident prevention, accidents continue to be a major cause of blindness, probably due to the tremendous increase in exposure to mechanical and industrial hazards, corollaries of our technological age. (The table showing distribution of the blind according to cause of blindness is shown on the following page.)

TABLE III¹³DISTRIBUTION OF THE BLIND ACCORDING
TO PERIOD OF BLINDNESS

Cause	Number	Per cent
Disease	2,132	60.6
Accident	489	14.0
Unknown	518	14.8
Not stated	373	10.6
Total	3,512	100.0

Classification of
disease causes:

Cataract	603	17.2
Detached retina	5	.1
Glaucoma	239	6.8
Hemorrhage	16	.5
Trachoma	25	.7
Tumor	13	.4
Ulcers	3	.1
Total	909	25.0

General disease conditions:

Congenital	203	.5
Influenza	14	.4
Measles	40	1.1
Nerve diseases	232	6.6
Old age	103	2.9
Paralysis	2	.1
Strain (poor light)	7	.2
Scarlet Fever	17	.5
Venereal Diseases	2	.1
Other Diseases	603	17.1
Total	1,223	34.8

Classification of accident
causes:

Fire	9	.3
Home	32	.9
Industrial	137	3.9
War	3	.1
Other	308	8.8
Total	459	14.0

¹³ Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif. Bulletin No. 7, (April, 1935). Table X, p. 9.

Distribution of the Blind According
to Years of Schooling

Since education can compensate to some extent for physical incapacity, the levels of education among the blind are highly significant. Specific vocational training is probably the most valuable tool which can be acquired by the handicapped to alleviate in a measure the economic burden incurred by physical disabilities. The figures for 1935 do not reflect the present expanding program for such specific training, although they do indicate the levels of general education. California affords a liberal program for the education of its school-age blind. On the other hand, it is presumed that adult education among the blind who lose their sight later in life is at a very low level. (The table showing distribution of the blind according to years of schooling is shown on the following page.)

TABLE IV¹⁴
 DISTRIBUTION OF THE BLIND ACCORDING
 TO YEARS OF SCHOOLING

Years of Schooling	Number	Per cent
None	566	16.1
Grades 1-6	665	19.0
7-8	601	17.1
9-12 (high school)	712	20.4
13-16 (university)	257	7.3
Not stated	284	8.1
Now in school	427	12.2
Total	3,512	100.0

Employment of the Blind

Distribution of the Blind According
 to Number Employed

Approximately 90% of the blind were shown to be unemployed and had been unemployed during the entire period of blindness. Of the approximately 5%, recorded as employed, a large part were employed in sheltered workshops. In addition to the large number of blind persons unemployable as a result of senility and general diseases, the group from 20-50 years of age, or approximately 22%, showed a very low average of employment. Of the total number of employable blind, the percentage of those actually employed was 25%.

¹⁴ Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif. Bulletin No. 7, (April, 1935) Table XI, p.11.

TABLE V¹⁵
 DISTRIBUTION OF THE BLIND ACCORDING
 TO NUMBER EMPLOYED

	Number	Per cent
Blind now employed	176	5.0
Blind not now employed	3,199	91.1
Not stated	137	3.9
Total	3,512	100.0

Distribution as to Period of Employment

It is reasonable to suppose that depression affects employment for the blind as it does for the sighted. The information given in the following table concerns the length of time blind workers have been employed since 1929.

TABLE VI¹⁶
 DISTRIBUTION OF THE BLIND ACCORDING
 TO LENGTH OF PERIOD OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Period of unemployment	Number	Per cent
Less than 1 year	39	1.1
1 year	61	1.7
2 years	113	3.2
3 years	126	3.6
4 years	107	3.0
More than 4 years	1,534	43.8
Not stated	1,356	38.6
Employed	175	5.0
Total	3,512	100.0

15 Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif. Bulletin No. 7, (April, 1935), Table XV, p. 13.

16 Ibid., Table XVI, p. 14.

"This tabulation confirms the conclusions to be drawn from the previous one as to the serious extent of unemployment among the blind, and indicates further that the situation is not new nor of recent origin. Even the showing that 12% were employed to some extent during the past four years is not conclusively favorable, because it is known that some of this group lost their sight during that period and their loss of employment was therefore not wholly due to the depression."¹⁶

Distribution According to Earned Income

Approximately 95% of the blind reported no earned income. Only 2.51% reported earnings over \$20 a month. This percentage in actual numbers at the time the survey was made amounted to 68 individuals. Even considering that the survey was made at nearly the lowest point in the depression of 1928-38, the earnings constituted a bare pittance.

¹⁶ Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif., Bulletin No. 7, (April 1935), Table XVI, p. 14.

TABLE VII¹⁷
DISTRIBUTION OF THE BLIND ACCORDING
TO MONTHLY EARNINGS

Earnings	Number	Per cent
Below \$10.00	47	1.33
\$10.00 to \$20.00	41	1.17
\$21.00 to \$30.00	28	.79
\$31.00 to \$50.00	21	.60
\$51.00 to \$75.00	14	.41
Over \$75.00	25	.71
Not stated or none	3,336	94.92
Total	3,512	100.00

Occupational Training

Since the available statistics on occupational training do not differentiate between the training received before and after blindness occurred, the specific types of training received or skills acquired are not pertinent to this paper. The most significant fact disclosed was that 60% of the blind had no vocational training whatsoever. This situation makes obvious the need for specific vocational training for the blind.¹⁸

Contrary to popular belief, the blind do not follow specific occupational trends. Fifty-five different occupations were recorded by 176 persons,

¹⁷ Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif. Bulletin No. 7 (April 1935), Table XVII, p. 15.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Table XVIII, pp. 15-16.

indicating a wide dispersion.

Approximately 33% were engaged in the professions and a slightly smaller percentage were in trade, while only 11.9% were in industry. The editors of the reference used here concluded--"The inference is that competition is possible in the professions and in business to a certain extent, but almost not at all in industry."¹⁹ This conclusion judged in terms of the situation as it then existed is probably logical. With the aid of modern rehabilitation services, competition in industrial pursuits for trained blind persons seems quite feasible. It is probable that blind employment in industry will eventually surpass the success so far achieved in the professions and in trades.

Employment Wanted

Advanced age and other physical incapacities and discouragement keep many individuals from seeking employment. Approximately 81% of the blind fell in this category. Eleven and two

¹⁹ Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif., Bulletin No. 7, (April 1935), Table XII, pp. 15-16.

tenths per cent were recorded as actively seeking employment.²⁰ This, it should be noted, is smaller than the age group from 20 to 50 years, presumed employable age for the blind, which was 22 per cent.

Relief Status

The 1935 Survey indicated 5.8% on relief. While this figure may not be strictly accurate, 5.8% added to the number receiving "state aid," (which is for technical reasons differentiated from "relief") the total percentage of persons receiving financial aid from the government was approximately 52%.²¹ In short, more than half of the blind population was dependent upon public relief, and it is presumed that most of the remainder were wholly or partially dependent upon personal or private assistance.

²⁰ Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in Calif., Bulletin No. 7 (April 1935), Table IX, pp. 18-19.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Table XXI, p. 19.

SECTION V
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Part A

Definition

To clarify the meaning of the following chapter, exact definitions of the terms used and their derivations are given. In the actual practice of vocational rehabilitation the definitions of the terms describe specific activities and interests; they are not connotative implications.

Vocation.--Regular or appropriate employment; calling; occupation; profession.

Vocational.--Of or pertaining to vocation.

Rehabilitate.--To invest or clothe again with some right, authority, or dignity; to restore, as a delinquent, to a former right, rank or privilege, lost or forfeited.

Rehabilitation.--Act of rehabilitating, or state of that which has been rehabilitated.¹

Vocational Rehabilitation.--Defined in the 1943 amendments to the Federal Vocational Reha-

¹Webster's New International Dictionary, 1926.

bilitation Act² as follows: "The term 'vocational rehabilitation' and the term 'rehabilitation services' mean any service necessary to render a disabled person fit to engage in a remunerative occupation."

The California Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation further defines these terms (as quoted, in part, below);

"It is, in practice, a service of vocational adjustment with supplementary services as needed in individual cases. It is a service for creating or re-creating earning capacity for all types of physically handicapped persons through vocational adjustment."

" . . . it is a phase of adult, vocational education specializing in training for those who, on account of physical impairment, need the assistance of expert, experienced counselors to advise them concerning suitable vocational endeavor, to be followed by vocational training which will render them employable despite disability."³

²Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1930; as amended, 29 U.S.C., Sec. 31-41 (Supp. 1943).

³Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons in Calif., (Sacramento: Calif. State Printing Off., 1944), VIII, No. 4, p. 6.

Part B

Need for Vocational Rehabilitation

Society now recognizes a responsibility for the cure, care, education, and vocational adjustment of the physically disabled. Ignorance and prejudices, on the part of the public as a whole and employers in particular, are still major factors which hinder the vocational adjustment of the physically disabled. When the eager but uninitiated handicapped individual applies directly to an employer for placement, he is risking repeated failures and consequent discouragement. Furthermore, if he is not successful in convincing the employer of his worth, he will surely confirm the employer's prejudices. For the present, the obvious solution is the participation of a third party or agency to act as intermediary and moderator, bringing employers and potential employees together on a common ground, pointing up their mutual needs and advantages. This activity constitutes a job of selling to employers facts about the employment of the handicapped, based on research and experience, as replacements for misconceptions and misunderstandings. The skilled

vocational training officer is qualified because of his knowledge of the problems of the handicapped and of the individuals and their potentialities. Moreover, he has confidence in their ability.⁴

Part C

Rehabilitation--Its Functions and Activities

For the purpose of illustration we shall refer again to the program of rehabilitation as carried out in California. California is among the states having a well-developed Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation. The program is divided into ten sections, each of which is a separate function servicing a unique requirement, and all are integrated to supplement and unify the activities of the Bureau. The following services are available to the individual as they are applicable to his needs.

"1. Disabled persons are located through an organized case-finding program, and offered rehabilitation service if unemployed or not suitably

⁴Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons in Calif., (Sacramento: Calif. State Printing Off., 1944), XIII, No. 4, pp. 2-3.

employed.

2. An expert diagnosis is made of their employment needs and of their physical, mental and vocational resources.

3. Corrective surgery or therapeutic treatment may be provided or secured if necessary for employment.

4. Prosthetic devices (limbs, hearing aids, etc.) may be provided or secured if necessary for employment.

5. Expert counseling or guidance assists them to decide upon a suitable employment objective.

6. A plan is prepared outlining the steps or services needed to enable the disabled person to secure suitable employment.

7. Training, carefully planned and supervised, is provided those who need such preparation for employment.

8. Maintenance during training may be provided in case of need.

9. Other necessary services incident to the solution of personal or family problems are provided or secured.

10. The culminating factor and an essential step in every case is entry into suitable, remunerative employment. Each placement is followed up to determine its lasting success or to provide any needed adjustment."⁵

Part D

Case-finding

Each county has one or more rehabilitation training officers assigned to it. Other state, county, and private agencies co-operate by reporting cases which may be suitable for the services of the Bureau. In addition to his duty of executing the state program, the training officer makes himself available to the students of all public schools as a part of the case-finding program.⁶

The California School for the Blind has a training officer specifically assigned to serve the needs of its students and graduates. This activity is one of the newest and reflects the acknowledgment by the workers in this field that

⁵Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons in Calif. (Sacramento: Calif. State Printing Off., 1944), XIII No. 4, pp. 10-11.

⁶Ibid., p. 25.

specific difficulties are incurred in vocational adjustment of the blind.

Part E

Diagnosis

An evaluation of the education, training, aptitudes, mental, emotional, and physical capacities is made to determine potential fields of employment and need for vocational training.

Part F

Restoration

Rehabilitation cases are analyzed from a physical standpoint to determine whether corrective surgery or therapeutic treatment will enable or aid the placement of the individual. It has been found that such treatment may aid greatly in the solution of employment problems and in many cases has removed them entirely. The fact that there are many disabled persons, especially those with visual handicaps, who have never received expert medical diagnosis or treatment, which might have removed the disability entirely or in part, makes this a productive activity of the Bureau.

Part G Prosthetic Devices

In the case of the blind, artificial eyes constitute a prosthetic device which aids in the employment possibilities of the individual through improving his physical appearance.

Part H Employment Selection

The training officer assists in the selection of employment objectives through his realistic knowledge of employment opportunities available and their suitability for the individual. This advice is especially valuable since most handicapped individuals do not fully realize their own capacities, nor are they acquainted with the requirements of available employment. Since there are some 17,000 occupations,⁷ the layman cannot be expected to choose the most suitable vocation.

Part I Planning

The training officer with the consent of the trainee prepares a plan for vocational rehabilita-

⁷U.S. Dept. of Labor, Dictionary of Occupational Titles, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, June, 1939).

tion. This plan outlines in detail the steps which are deemed essential for successful employment. For example:

1. Performing surgery, three months' convalescence.
2. Fitting for prosthetic device, approximately three months for adjustment thereto.
3. Attending trade school, approximately one year.
4. Arranging for financial assistance during training (maintenance).
5. Arranging interviews with employers in suitable industries.
6. Checking, or "follow-up", by training officer in intervals of two weeks during first two months of employment and monthly thereafter until the sixth month.

Part J

Training

Up to a maximum of two years, training for a specific occupation may be provided through payment of tuition, and in some cases other incidental expenses, for the trainee's attendance at a recognized institution. A major item occasionally

sponsored by the Bureau is that of maintenance of a trainee during actual training period.

Part K

Supplementary Services

In many cases, complete vocational rehabilitation is not possible until personal or family problems are removed. The training officer in some cases may be able to give this service but more often will arrange for assistance from a suitable private or public agency.

Part L

Employment

In the last analysis, the contacts made by the training officer for the trainee with employer is the most valuable service offered by the Bureau. It eliminates most of the fortuitous searching for employment with consequent discouragement and frustration.

Part M

Follow-up

The training officer can check his own success, as well as that of his client, by continuing his interest in the case through periodical checks with the employee and employer to determine

whether the placement is yielding best possible results. Since poor placements are of no value to the disabled individual, and are detrimental to the disabled as a whole and to the employer, such cases should be remedied immediately.

Part N

Adjustments

If a placement is successful on the whole even though minor items causing irritation to employee or employer exist, the training officer may make suggestions as to the removal of such irritations. For example, some blind employees find it convenient to travel about industrial plants unaided. This is a constant source of worry to their employers. This problem has been solved many times by training officers who arranged for some congenial employee in the plant to accompany the blind worker to and from the various parts of the building.

Part O

Rehabilitation Officer for the Blind

It has long been obvious to those who work in the field of rehabilitation that the blind are especially difficult to place in satisfactory

employment. To help overcome this difficulty, California has embarked on an expanded program calling for the employment of blind, or partially blind, specialists. The principle of this procedure is the belief that qualified blind persons can best demonstrate to employers the capabilities of the blind, presenting simultaneously necessary information to uninitiated employers. The need for rehabilitation training officers is apparent when one considers the disadvantageous position in which any disabled person, and especially the blind, finds himself when applying for a job. When the application for employment is definitely refused, the applicant is left with two disagreeable alternatives; to make as graceful a retreat as possible, or in the face of expressed opposition to present his case as best he can. This tends to fixate the employer's attention on the defense of his original stand rather than to open his mind to the potentialities of the applicant. When a rehabilitation training officer visits a potential employer, he is a third party acting in the best interests of both employer and applicant. He is able to present

forcefully convincing arguments, pointing up the mutual advantage of hiring the blind. This he does without incurring personal animosity or further prejudicing the employer against employment of the blind.

Part F

Vending Stand Program

A specific activity of the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation is the establishment and supervision of vending stands in various public buildings.

"An additional service for selected blind persons is establishment of vending stands in federal buildings. The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation has been designated as the official licensing agency for these vending stands under the terms of the Randolph-Sheppard Act. Under this plan blind persons with suitable personal qualifications and business ability are established as the operators of vending stands in post offices and other public buildings. Although the program is limited because no public funds have been provided for the establishment of stands or for the employment of personnel to give this program

special attention, the plan has been most satisfactory in operation and has demonstrated conclusively that selected blind persons can become fully self-supporting through this means."⁸

This activity constitutes a virtual monopoly by the blind on commercial enterprises of this nature in public buildings. This unusual procedure was adopted to accommodate the needs of enterprising blind persons who wished to engage in some kind of commerce on the retail level, but who are without sufficient financial backing or business experience to engage in larger and more competitive enterprises.

Part C

Service to Employers

There occur several types of situations between employees and their employers in which the representative of the bureau can be of inestimable value. Rehabilitation of injured employees offers to responsible employers solution of a perplexing problem, since skills and aptitudes of old em-

⁸Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons in Calif., (Sacramento: Calif. State Printing Off., 1944), XIII, No. 4, pp. 19-20.

ployees can be re-directed to gainful ends. Rehabilitated employees seldom suffer from traumatic neurosis in that they are returned to work, have continued means of support, have some self-sufficiency, are regarded with approval by fellow employees, and feel little or no resentment toward their employers as no difficulties arise from compensation disputes or loss of employment. Efficiency may be increased since the employee should have a more earnest attitude toward his employer and his job, and since he has had the advantage of expert vocational counseling.⁹

Part II

Justification of Public Expenditure for Rehabilitation

Upon the initiation of any public program for the general betterment of a group, or society as a whole, the burden on that portion of the public who are tax payers must be considered. Even if the cost of rehabilitation for one individual should run as high as \$1,500, it is usually a

⁹Calif. State Dept. of Ed., Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons in Calif., (Sacramento: Calif. State Printing Off., 1944), XIII, No. 4, pp. 20-21.

sound investment since cost of maintenance of such an individual and his dependents on relief over a period of years would amount to many times this sum. The following figures will illustrate this.

"In a recent and typical pre-war year of rehabilitation service, 1215 disabled men and women were rehabilitated.

Of this number, 620 had worked prior to disablement and 595 had had no work experience.

After disablement and before rehabilitation, 289 had done some work but not successfully, since only 68 were working when contacted by the Bureau.

The total weekly wage of the group prior to disablement was \$14,451.53. After disablement and before rehabilitation it had dropped to \$4,339.95.

Rehabilitation service increased the weekly wage of the group to \$24,945.05. In other words, rehabilitation service created in these unemployed and, if unaided, unemployable disabled persons an earning capacity of \$20.53 per week each, as an average."

"The average cost per rehabilitant was less than \$200.

The average annual wage per rehabilitant was \$1,067.56.

It follows that in a single year these disabled persons earned five times the cost of their rehabilitation.

The annual earnings of the group following rehabilitation was \$1,277,142.60.

With an average age of 30 years, the group would conservatively have a work expectancy of 15 years. In that period they can reasonably be expected to earn \$19,147,139.00.¹⁰

In California for the fiscal year 1941-42 (selected as a typical pre-war year), of 1,944 persons rehabilitated, there were 14 blind (.7%), 42 (2.2%) with defective vision, and 46 (2.4%) with one eye; or 5.3% of the rehabilitants had visual defects.¹¹

Part 8

Evaluation of Vocational Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is a solution to the employment problems of the blind. The problems have not

¹⁰Calif. State Dept., of Ed., Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons in Calif., (Sacramento: Calif. State Printing Off., 1944), XIII, No. 4, pp. 30-31.

¹¹Ibid. appendix I, p. 37.

been solved, but the way to solve them has been found. The work so far accomplished by rehabilitation is well worth the cost. Further experience will no doubt bring increasing returns on the financial and personal investments in this field.

As rehabilitation is a new departure, we can expect the methods and results to improve with experience, assuming that politics and inefficiencies are kept to a minimum. The quality of the personnel of bureaus of vocational rehabilitation must be raised from year to year so that eventually the rehabilitation training officer will be a quasi-professional career man. University training in appropriate subjects, personal attributes of intelligence, understanding, and initiative must be demanded. The time has passed when anyone with only an interest in rehabilitation or a need for employment can be hired as a training officer.

SECTION VI

EMPLOYERS' INSURANCE RISKS

It is well known to any disabled person who has applied for employment and to rehabilitation officers that one of the most frequent arguments used by employers against hiring of handicapped persons is that their insurance programs forbid or make impracticable such employment. In nearly all of the states the legislatures have worded their insurance codes to prevent compensation and liability insurance plans from hindering the employment possibilities of the handicapped.

There seems to be a popular misconception about the liability incurred by the employer in event of a second-injury case. Actually, liability is limited to such disability resulting from the second injury as measured in terms of an original disability. The total disability (original disability plus second injury,) is not considered in computing employers' liability nor in computing compensation awards. Obviously, this is an advantage to the employer in terms of insurance costs since second injuries bear no more liability than original injuries. Any risk of a composite

disability, which might be uncompensated, resulting from a complication of disabilities must be borne by the employee. This risk is very slight.

"In one study extending over a period of thirteen years, covering 4,404 case histories of men with orthopedic handicaps, a lower incidence of accidents was found than for a control group of normal workers. Only eight second accidents occurred, although the disabled workers held 10,176 jobs in 635 different types of work. The added risk is negligible."¹

The California State Bureau of Rehabilitation states the problem as follows:

"The Workmen's Compensation Act provides that in case of subsequent injury, compensation for the later injury shall not exceed the amount allowed for such injury when considered by itself and not in conjunction with previous disability.

Neither is liability insurance affected by the employment of handicapped persons, except that if losses were increased, thereby, the pre-

¹Roy N. Anderson, The Disabled Man and His Vocational Adjustment; A study of the types of jobs held by 4,404 orthopedic cases in relation to specific ability. (N.Y.: Institute for the Crippled and Disabled, 1932) p. 54.

mium rate might subsequently be raised on the basis of the experience."²

Section 11,735 of the Insurance Code provides (in connection with premium rates) that: "Such classifications or system shall take no account of any physical impairment of employees or the extent to which employees may have persons dependent upon them for support."³

It would appear, in order to remove misunderstandings of insurance provisions, that widespread publicity is necessary. Rehabilitation training officers and the Bureau's literature are slowly progressing in the enlightenment of individuals on whom the disabled must rely for employment opportunities.

²Roy N. Anderson, The Disabled Man and His Vocational Adjustment; A study of the types of jobs held by 4,404 orthopedic cases in relation to specific ability. (N.Y.: Institute for the Crippled and Disabled, 1932) p. 24.

³Insurance Code, State of California, 1939, p. 310, Sec. 11,735.

SECTION VII

EDUCATION'S CONTRIBUTION TO
VOCATIONAL DELINQUENCY

The evaluation here made of work done in the fields of education is not derogatory criticism, as admittedly honest endeavors have been made with some gratifying results. Possibly many of the mistakes that have been made resulted from too few individuals assuming responsibility for multitudinous problems. Institutions for the education of youth have tried to solve the problems of the world within their relatively secluded walls. Educators have tried to take the responsibilities thrust on them which is to their credit. That they have continued to struggle with problems outside of their domain without calling for assistance is not creditable.

Educators and the public seem to be confused as to what our established institutions are expected to offer. It is agreed that to all of those who can benefit by it education should be freely given. It is not so generally agreed as to who will receive education plus training, nor to what extent education and training should be of-

ferred. Since by definition and practice education is the art of instilling in the young culture patterns, characteristic and values, it is essential for all. Since training is the repetitive practice for the acquiring of skills, which are necessary for our economic existence, we must have it also.

Criticism has been made that there is entirely too much valueless mechanical training on the lower levels of education. Learning Braille at too early an age, making baskets, and caning chairs over a prolonged period of time have been shown to produce physical and nervous fatigue far beyond that which should be endured by growing animals. The educational value of such mechanical operations is lost if initiated at too early an age or continued beyond the point of diminishing returns. The value of education lies in the introduction of the individual to new problems and methods for meeting them. To reduce any triviality to monotony is to lose its significance and its educational value. The individual, attaining perfection in an outmoded or transitory skill, has gained it at the sacrifice of the rich inher-

itance which education might have brought him. Well-adjusted blind persons, like their sighted contemporaries must at least be familiar with the myriad of commonplace things and experiences and know how to meet the problems arising from them. This type of person can be developed within the confines of an institution only if the administration has made an effort to reproduce the larger society artificially.

This is an age of specialization particularly for blind persons as they make extremely poor "jacks-of-all-trades" because of their physical limitations. Training for them is an essential phase of and supplement to general education. After an individual has acquired all of the general education that he can absorb or that he can make use of, training should begin for a specific skill or line of endeavor. Since, ordinarily, one is not able arbitrarily to choose his occupation with assurance that he will be able to find employment therein, training which is applicable to a general field of endeavor should be sought.

As one authority states: "...take into consideration the vagries of invention, the fact

that the hand operations of today may be thrown on the scrap heap tomorrow, and choose those occupations that have the greatest possibility of continued existence as well as the readiest market for products."¹

Contrary to the popular belief that in our industrial age the demand for mechanical skills changes so rapidly as to exclude blind persons from competition, training in the various phases of industrial processes which are suitable to the blind will enable them to adjust to the dynamic requirements within broad limits.² This is pos-

¹R. S. French, From Homer to Helen Keller, (N.Y.: American Foundation for the Blind, Inc., 1932), p. 199.

"The writer has had several personal experiences which will serve to illustrate this point. One among them is shown by the following quotation from a letter of recommendation given upon severance from Hammond Aircraft Company, South San Francisco, California and signed by Robert Goodyear, Foreman, Assembly Dept. "...after mastering certain fundamentals of the aircraft industry at our training school, he was assigned to regular production work. In spite of his handicap, his production record and the quality of his work has been nothing short of miraculous.

Mr. Dautermann regularly used drill presses, hand motors, rivet guns with the accuracy of any person with all of their faculties. Many times the operations he performed also included the use of small jigs and fixtures, or the drilling of holes through steel bushings. Relying entirely upon his sense of feeling, the quality of his

sible since there are many acquired skills requiring the same particular aptitude. Hence, one who has a comprehensive understanding of the problems involved in a specific industrial pursuit may find innumerable opportunities to acquire and practice new mechanical operations.

While the deplorable situation of the blind vocationally cannot be blamed entirely on educators or their institutions, they must take the responsibility for the portion of unemployment which is directly due to lack of suitable skills, training, and education which would otherwise prepare the blind for the available employment. The organization of education in most of our states has, for the re-training of adults who have lost their sight after having received specific training or who have passed the usual age for such training. Hence, there is a staggering number of the blind who indicate having had no occupational training or having had training which is no longer valuable.

riveting was uncannily better than that done by many of our Class A mechanics. We have never at any time considered him a problem or had any trouble finding special jobs for him."

It is hoped that the program of rehabilitation now well under way, will help schools for the blind to modify their curricula to turn out blind graduates so well educated and trained that they are fitted for their lives as blind persons in a sighted world. It is an unnecessary waste of time and duplication of services for any graduate of a school for the blind to find it expedient to call upon the services of a bureau of rehabilitation to supplement his education for adjustment to life outside the school. Since public schools for the sighted find it necessary to supplement general education with vocational training at whatever level is applicable to the aptitudes and needs of the individual student, it is logical to assume that schools for the blind must follow the same procedure. It is too often overlooked that blind children are individuals, having individual differences rather than being a class or type exclusively different because of their blindness. The difference, if any, is that vocational training is more important for the blind than for those having all their senses, who can consequently seek out employment and the necessary training by what-

ever means are at hand.

The lack of specific vocational training among the blind was disclosed in 1935 by figures which showed 646 blind persons who had training which made them employable out of a total number of 1,397 who had some kind of training before or after the loss of sight.³ Although it was theoretically possible for the blind to engage in occupations requiring this training, it was not acquired by individuals who could make the best use of it or who were in a situation or location which demanded such training. The number of actually employed persons having specific vocational training was 112 out of the total 646 trained individuals. Although the figures do not show that the employed individuals were the ones who had the required training for the indicated employment, it is reasonable to assume that such trained persons would be engaged in their chosen occupations rather than unemployed, while untrained persons were employed. The correlation between training received

³ Calif. State Dept. of Ed., A Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in California, No. 7, (Sacramento: State Printing Off., April 1, 1935). Tables XVIII and XIX, pp. 16-17.

and employment requiring such training is actually so low as to indicate very little relation between the two factors. Since sighted persons are frequently found in occupations differing from those for which they were formally trained, it is reasonable to assume that the many trying circumstances which plague the blind in their search for employment would force them to accept available work, regardless of its relationship to their training. The conclusion drawn is that, if the blind are left to their own resources to gain occupational training and then suitable employment, the work found, if any, bears so little relation to the training as to have made it a very inefficient antecedent to employment.

The current outlook for the participation of educational factors in the vocational preparation of our blind youths and older people is far brighter than might be expected in view of the education and training record to date. The influence of World War II on the public's attitude towards the needs and capabilities of the blind cannot be accurately estimated. However, attention has been drawn to the problems of the blind by the volumi-

nous publicity given to their participation in wartime industry and the rehabilitation programs of the armed forces. It is assumed that educators will not be slow to take advantage of this public favor and expand their programs to the limit of available personnel and financial backing.

SECTION VIII
OTHER OCCUPATIONAL PROBLEMS

Part A

The Motivation for Aid

The motivation for the sighted to assist the blind springs from the source of all human motivation. In general we do those things which satisfy and bring to us as much contentment as possible through resolving conflicts of desires and demands. Assistance to the blind is often given because the sighted desire to remove an uncomfortable emotional response stimulated by the plight of the blind. The assistance is given willingly; but, since it springs too often from an emotional rather than a rational motivation, it is not directed to the most beneficial end. Those things which are of the greatest social significance and of the greatest benefit to the blind in yielding personal satisfaction are not always the obvious. Illustrating this is the common practice of giving alms to the blind without considering their many other needs. Another illustration is in occupational situations where the potential employer

insists that he has no employment for the blind since he does not have an opening of a passive or sedentary nature. He conceives this type to be the only employment suitable for the blind. The net result of such undirected assistance is to "kill with kindness" through the inadequacy of the aid.

Part B

Difficulties of Promotion

Once employment has been obtained the optimism of a blind individual knows no bounds. Having conquered seemingly the greatest handicap blindness imposes, most individuals are hopeful, as are the normal, of progressing in skill and position in their field of employment. Unhappily, it does not take long for the individual to discover that the employer is best satisfied when his blind workers do the job for which they were hired as unobtrusively as possible. Since most employers have little imagination as to the possibilities of utilizing blind employees to their mutual advantage, they look with disfavor on their search for greater fields to conquer. In that the blind have difficulty, even in surroundings to which they

have been accustomed, in seeking out specific operations for which they are best fitted, progress through the ranks is interminably slow. Those workers who do progress must endlessly experiment and investigate the various available lines of advancement on their own time. As ability is the most convincing argument for hiring, it is a prerequisite for advancement. Tact and diplomacy must be employed when seeking advancement as it is usual for the sceptical employer to take a defensive attitude toward any modification of the status quo.

Part C Sustaining Motivation

Frustration resulting from dead-end jobs and the difficulty of advancement is a common phenomenon among the blind. The alternatives are few for the individual who finds himself in a position unsatisfying because of its lack of demands upon his abilities. He can remove himself from such employment, but to do so places him back at his original problem, the search for elusive employment. Mentioned previously, the second alternative is a tenacious struggle for greater opportu-

nities, if indeed they exist.

Accepted too often is the third alternative with its possibilities of personal degradation. This is to make an adjustment to the dead-end situation by compromising personal aims and ideals; for which compromise, compensation must be made. Compensation is accomplished in as many ways as there are individuals. An attempt to compensate for employment inadequacies through outside activities is a healthful sublimation since the individual can adapt to a process of pigeon-holing those values which are incompatible. Giving way to complete frustration is to lay the foundation for greater and possible complete personal disorganization. The most degrading process for adjustment is that of resorting to an escape mechanism. While they are not obvious to society, mental gymnastics which accomplish this end are no less destructive than the more obvious use of alcohol and narcotics.

In short, employment does not necessarily bring an end to the occupational problems of the blind. Continued successful employment constitutes a series of personal adjustments to the

physical demands of the situation and to the attitudes of those who compose the occupational environment. With the blind, as with others, employment is but one phase of life; adjustment among the composite factors must be continually and successfully made.

SECTION III

CONCLUSION

Blindness alone need not be the cause of total disability in any fields except those specifically requiring vision for the major part of their activities. Total disability usually results from blindness plus other physical defects or degeneration. For those blind individuals who are otherwise physically fit but find themselves living the lives of the totally disabled, sociological and psychological rehabilitation can restore their faith in their own ability to live happily through at least partial participation in the physical, economic, and social activities of the community. Since the concept of blindness as a total disability has been proved unrealistic and is the result of social attitudes, it is the responsibility of society to recognize its negative contribution to the psychology of the blind, and further to acknowledge their remaining capacities and utilize them.

Our society draws its vigor from economic competition. Since economic competition, like other competition, brings success to the most fit,

blind persons have a fundamental handicap which can be overcome only by superiority in other qualifying attributes for success. Most economic values are founded on the amount of labor necessary to produce commodities. Since intrinsic worth is immeasurable in terms other than the physical and intellectual labor which makes a commodity or service available, amassing of wealth depends upon the work done for its creation. Hence the average blind person is in precisely the same position as is any one else in his relation to the economy. He must first work to create wealth for his own sustenance, and if he wishes to profit from the labor of others, he must work to produce a surplus which can be used as capital investment. The inferior position of the blind in competition for employment impairs their opportunities for success in other phases of economic endeavor. The fact that competition is possible, when there are compensatory factors, does not change the existing situation in which the blind are found to be unable to obtain their share of the available employment.

Fundamentally, the very low economic status

of the blind is the basis for the social and psychological problems which are unique to this group. Obviously, all personal problems cannot be attributed to economic inferiority; but, as in the larger society, problems of personal and social disorganization are more prevalent in the lower economic strata. The obvious personal adjustments which must be made by the individual to accommodate himself to blindness cannot be minimized. Since the personality has such a tremendous capacity for adjustment to the unfamiliar, permanent personal disorganization does not have to result from blindness if the society accepts the individual as such and preserves his right to self-respect through self-support.

The various problems which plague the blind are not necessarily exclusive with them. Such problems are found among the sighted and among those otherwise handicapped. The problems which seem to be most frequently found are unique only to the extent that the acuteness is of a higher degree. The solutions of the problems of the blind must necessarily follow the same procedure as solutions of problems of other groups. Every

individual must find an adult way of life compatible with his aims and ideals, regardless of physical disability, if healthful psychological adjustment is to be achieved.

The newly blinded have a fixed concept of their position in society which must be adjusted to society's stereotypes of the blind. The congenitally blind and those who have lost their sight early in life too often have an unrealistic or idealistic picture of their position for the post-school period. Psychological adjustment, which does not necessarily imply acceptance, is the accommodation of the existing attitudes of the individual to those of society towards him.

The phenomenon of blindness has provoked attempts to remedy its disadvantages as long ago as the earliest recordings of history. As the primitive society was not able to assist the blind and lacked the motivation to do so and because the disabled were a burden imperiling the welfare of the group, they were removed by execution or exile. As civilization established personal values and moral standards, methods for the accommodation of the handicapped were invented. It was not until

modern times that the methods of caring for the blind were adapted to the improvement of living standards of the blind for their sake alone. The ideals of personal and vocational rehabilitation are contemporary concepts growing out of social pathology and stimulated by acute situations resulting from industrial expansion and mass military destruction.

Since the public does not as yet accept the blind as economic equals, the many existing provisions for services and grants to the blind as economic dependents must be accepted and, indeed, improved. For the most part the welfare programs for the blind are generous and comprehensive. They are manifestations of social responsibility for the less fortunate individuals. Many of the existing governmental and private services will always be essential to those individuals who cannot supply themselves with the necessities of life and to augment the opportunities for a full life for others. It is to be hoped that much of the formal activity now essential for the welfare of the blind will not be necessary when society, through education, recognizes the potentialities

of the handicapped and grants them opportunities to become self-supporting.

Actually, the statistical information about the blind in the United States is quite inadequate for the composition of an over-all picture of the status of the blind. Since the United States Census Bureau has temporarily abandoned the collection of this material, the records of agencies serving the blind are our only guides. Obviously, these sources yield a distorted picture unless we assume that the major part of the blind population calls upon public and private agencies for assistance. More complete statistical information is necessary for accurate analysis of existing needs and for planning the services for these requirements. Without accurate information it is impossible to stress the lines of endeavor which might yield the greatest benefits whether they be in the fields of prevention or of relief.

Approximately 22% of the blind are of employable age. An optimistic estimate of the employed of this group is 25%. Although these figures are incomplete, they indicate the great need for employment opportunities. Vocational rehabilitation

is the method which we now perceive to be most likely to yield encouraging results in this field. The two major phases of vocational rehabilitation are: one, the appropriate re-training and re-adjustment of the individual for the available employment; two, the re-educating of the public and, specifically, of employers to the end that they shall appreciate the potentialities of the disabled. Since the problems related to the readjustment of the handicapped are numerous and complex, they require the services of experts trained in this specific field. Further, rehabilitation is a function which will have to be continuous and dynamic as there will always be new cases and new problems. It is reasonable to assume that employment for the handicapped will always be difficult to obtain. The services of rehabilitation agents will be required for the dissemination of relevant information to prospective employers. At this writing, it is impossible to foresee how much of what is now known about the feasibility of employing the blind will become common knowledge of employers and consequently become accepted practice.

Workmen's compensation insurance and liability

ity insurance have been removed as hindrances to the employment of the handicapped by specific legislative provisions. As yet, it is not generally understood by employers that they may hire handicapped workers without impairing their insurance programs or increasing their insurance premiums. This is another fertile field in which public education can increase employment opportunities through making the facts about employer liability, common knowledge. The misconceptions of insurance provisions are important examples of popular ignorances which are a greater handicap to employment than actual physical disabilities.

At the present writing, nearly all of the states have made primary and secondary education available to the blind in schools especially equipped and staffed to serve their needs. Advanced education on the university level can be obtained in many states without undue financial burden to the individuals. Vocational training of a sort is available in most of the schools for the blind or is made possible through suitable arrangements with trade schools which co-operate with the schools for the blind.

The obvious fact that blind persons are at less disadvantage in fields of endeavor requiring intellectual ability has been the basis for a philosophy of education for the blind. This philosophy has resulted in the emphasis on advanced learning at the expense of specific vocational training. As in the general population, advanced education for the blind, who have the capacity for it and who can benefit from it, is desirable. In actual practice the number of individuals in this category is small, and even fewer are the individuals who are able to become self-supporting on the basis of such advanced education. The real harm is done to those individuals who do not have the capacity or aptitude for advanced education, and are subsequently allowed to discontinue their education without receiving specific training in some line of endeavor which would enable them to become self-supporting. In some schools, such individuals are looked upon as backward students and unavoidable responsibilities who are hindrances to the primary interest of the administration. A cross-section of the blind shows a comparable intellectual capacity to that of the

general population. Since an intelligence quotient of 110 is assumed to be required if an individual is to derive benefit from college training, the greater proportion of the blind require basic education related to and supplemented by vocational training. Institutions for the education of special groups are prone to become so involved with the search for solutions to their unique problems that they lose the greater values which might be derived from developing individuality in their students. Much of the dogma related to the motivations which brought about the founding of educational institutions for the blind remains to inhibit the activities of the modern institutions.

Pity for the blind in their world of physical and intellectual darkness brought many of the first remedial activities into being. Moralistic motivations related to Christianity were among the most potent drives stimulating the creation of improved living standards for the blind. Much contemporary motivation behind welfare endeavors is of a similar nature. Individuals experience vicarious emotions upon the contemplation of the

plight of the blind. Such disagreeable emotional orgies, fanned by religious fervor, still motivate a disproportionate amount of work with and for the blind. Handicaps of a physical nature constitute real problems. The solution of these problems is best accomplished without the influence of emotional attitudes. Logic and reason are the most efficient tools for the solving of socio-psychological problems. The realities of the individual personality and its relation to the economy and society must be diagnosed and a prognosis made which calls for the manipulation of those factors which can be adjusted to effect a compromise.

Much has been said about the work done for the blind; but the areas in which the blind might facilitate their own progress have been neglected. Too many of the blind have the attitude exemplified in the philosophy of: "the world owes me a living." This is a natural reaction to the abundance of social activities directed to doing things for the blind. Individuals, who have lived the major portion of the first twenty years in institutions which try to cater to their every need, have little conception of the realities of

a competitive world. Personal and vocational relationships of a conciliatory nature are often unknown to formerly isolated or institutionalized persons. The niceties of society and the diplomatics necessary for vocational success are not best learned in institutions. The blind must learn to appreciate the values of such personal characteristics as pleasing manners, diplomatic approaches, gracious acceptance of favors, and personal responsibility and integrity if they are to take advantage of the opportunities for personal and vocational advancement.

Personality disorganization is less likely to result from the numerous thwarting situations, which constantly occur in the lives of the blind, when strong positive personality characteristics exist. Unfounded idealistic self-evaluation ends in frustration when the earthiness of reality is encountered; whereas, a true evaluation of the individual's position in society will facilitate personal adjustment.

Vocational problems cannot be isolated from all other factors, but must be considered in relation to individual differences, social attitudes,

and to the ability of the economy to absorb blind workers. This study has revealed no new potential fields for aiding the blind in their quest for self-support. It has been found that the extension of several activities and the improvement of methods for the implementation of these activities must be brought up to date in order to produce graduates who are equipped for life in contemporary society. Vocational rehabilitation must be extended to all employable blind. Public education through mass media must be greatly expanded to make known the capacities of the employable blind, and to acquaint employers with their opportunities to implement rehabilitation. Further, mass media should be used to make known the desires of the blind to become community assets by attaining self-respect and self-support.

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Vocational problems of the blind
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